



The County Commuter

You Asked

Send your questions to
rideshare@ocgov.com
 and watch for the
 answer in future
 newsletters

In the last issue of *The County Commuter* newsletter, we asked you to share some of your burning questions about your commute to work, because if one person is asking we figure that other employees might have the same question. Here's what some of you were asking:

Q: I carpool with a non-Orange County employee. Do I still qualify for the Commuter Club?

A: Yes.

Q: Are there any incentives for employees that ride the bus to work?

A: There is a program in the works that will kick off late 2004 that will provide a one-time start-up subsidy for employees that wish to start taking the bus to work. And, the County of Orange has just joined the new Employer Pass program offered by OCTA that provides annual bus passes at a discount to employees. Look for more information, or check out the website for the latest updates.

Q: Is the "Guaranteed Return Trip" program only offered to County employees that are members of the Commuter Club?

A: No, the "Guaranteed Return Trip" program is available to all County employees who ride-share to work and then become ill, must get home in an emergency or unexpectedly have to work late. For more information about this program, log onto the Commuter Assistance Program website at www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare.

Q: If you have three people in the car, can you use the Express Lane on the 91 Freeway for free in both directions?

A: You can only use the eastbound lanes, except during the peak hours of 4 to 6 p.m. on weekdays.

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Points of interest:

- Metrolink's Beach Trains are back this summer. Check out their website www.thebeachtrain.com
- Check out our new and improved website at www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare

Carpool Contest

We want to hear from you! Have you been in the same carpool forever?! Do you have an unusual route that your carpool takes to get to work? Do you have a funny story about how you met your carpool partner? Do you hold the record for the most number of carpool partners in history? If you have a funny story to share with us, send an email note to rideshare@ocgov.com and our panel of "rideshare experts" will review and pick the best one and you'll be rewarded with a \$25 gift certificate to Mimi's Café! We'll also share your story (must be a true story) in the next issue of *The County Commuter* newsletter. Please be aware that your "story" cannot exceed 100 words, must be associated with a current carpool arrangement, and must be submitted by August 6, 2004.



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The County Commuter Newsletter is published by the Commuter Assistance Program Office managed by the CEO/Employee Relations. Our mission is to distribute commuter information to all County of Orange employees so that they can make informed decisions about how they travel to work. For more information about the Commuter Assistance Program, please go to web site.



*Metrolink Quarterly Drawing Winner
Mari Hill, Health Care Agency*

Reasons To Bike To Work

It's healthy! Bicycling to work can help keep you in shape without having to set aside additional time for exercise. Bicycle commuters tend to enjoy healthier lifestyles.

It's smart! Bicycling is one of the least expensive ways to get to work. There's no gas, maintenance, parking fees or insurance to pay for.

It's clean! Bicycles don't pollute the air or require lots of land for roads or parking lots. Eight to twelve bicycles can park in the space required for just one car.

It's fun! A bicycle ride at the end of the day is a great way to relieve stress. Discovering the routes on back roads through residential areas can be scenic and fun.

Log onto www.bikemetro.com for information on bike routes in your area and tips to make your commute easier.

Tips For Safe Cycling

- Always ride in the direction of traffic
- Do not assume that motorists can see you; make eye contact before passing or merging
- Obey traffic signs and signals; use hand signals to tell motorists what you intend to do
- When turning left, either move like a motor vehicle by signaling and moving into the left lane or move like a pedestrian by walking your bike within designated crosswalks
- Do not weave between cars; motorists cannot see you
- Steer clear of the "door zone", parked motorists may suddenly open their car door
- Be wary of your blind spots as well as motorists' blind spots
- At night, law requires a white front light, red rear reflector and wheel and pedal reflectors
- Wear bright or reflective clothing for increased visibility
- Always wear a helmet!

Metrolink Winner

Each quarter, as part of the "Get Into Training" program, we award a \$100 transit voucher to one Metrolink rider who has submitted the drawing application after receiving the current rider or new rider commuter rail startup subsidy.

Congratulations go out to Quarterly Drawing winner Mari Hill, Health Care Agency.

Mari started the "Get Into Training" program in August of 2001 and moved through all three parts of the program. She continued to ride the Metrolink and took advantage of the extended subsidy available once every twelve months.

If you are interested in participating in the "Get Into Training" program, log onto the Commuter Assistance Program website at www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare, and click on the Incentive Programs button to print the Request For Information application form. You can also pick up an application from one of the Commuter Information Display racks located at 30 worksites throughout the County.